



Church of Scotland Guernsey



**OPEN HEARTS, OPEN MINDS, OPEN FAITH**

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*Christmas Newsletter*

## *Greetings From The Manse*

As we gather to celebrate the birth of Christ this Christmas, the words of John Bell's poignant hymn, *"Who Would Think That What Was Needed"*, offer a profound reflection on the unexpected ways God's love transforms the world. The hymn invites us to marvel at the simplicity and quiet power of the Christmas story: a child born in humble circumstances, a young woman's courage, and the astonishing truth that God chooses to work through the ordinary and overlooked. It reminds us that the world's greatest needs—hope, peace, love—are often met not through grand displays, but through small acts of kindness, courage, and faith.

This message is especially timely in a world where the loud and the powerful often dominate our attention. The hymn encourages us to look for God's presence in the quieter corners of life: in the joy of community, in acts of generosity, and in the faces of those we serve. Let this be our invitation this Christmas—to embody that same spirit of humble service, trusting that God works through even the smallest gestures to bring about His kingdom of peace and love.

We also take this moment to share the sad news of the passing of our beloved editor, Bill Harcus. Bill's dedication and creativity were the heart of our magazine, and his presence will be deeply missed. Until we are ready to relaunch in a new format, we will continue with this simple A4 sheet to keep you informed and connected.

Looking ahead, we are excited to share details of our new fundraising campaign to make our church more accessible and welcoming to all, particularly those with disabilities. In this season of giving, we will also support several charities that embody the spirit of compassion and hope at the heart of Christmas. Please check the dates for our Christmas services and events, and join us in celebrating together.

May this Christmas fill your hearts with the quiet joy of knowing God's love, and may the coming year bring peace, hope, and abundant blessings to you and your loved ones.

Blessings,

Justin





## *Dates for the Diary*

- 30th November at 10:30 – Bereavement Service
- 1st December at 10:30 – Worship and Communion Service
- 8th at 9:00 – Early Morning Communion
- 8th December at 10:30 – Worship Service
- 12th December at 17:00 – 18:00 – Congregation Singing at Market Square
- 15th December at 10:30 – Scratch Nativity and Tree Presents
- 15th December at 12:30 – Christmas Lunch at Cotils (Booking Required)
- 21st December at 11:00 – Carol Singing at St John's Residential Home
- 22nd December at 10:30 – Lessons and Carols
- 24th December at 14:00 – Family Service (Sweet Story, Games & Activities)
- 24th December at 21:00 – Watchnight in Bethlehem Service
- 25th December – Online Service (church's Youtube, Facebook and Website)
- 29th December at 10:30 – Worship Service
- 5th January at 10:30 – Worship Service

## *Charity the Church Is Supporting This Christmas*

We understand that times are financially challenging for many, so we encourage you to give only if you can. Together, even small contributions can make a significant difference.

On **1st December**, we'll support the **Moderator's Challenge 2024-25**, raising funds for £10 solar lamps to help children in Malawi study in the evenings. Details are available on the Charity Notice Board. On **15th December**, we'll collect tree gifts such as biscuits and sweets, along with donations for fuel vouchers, which will be distributed by Guernsey Welfare.

During our **Christmas lunch**, there will be a raffle in aid of the **Salvation Army Guernsey Christmas Day Lunch**, offering festive joy to those who need it most. Lastly, from **22nd to 29th December**, retiring collections at our Christmas services will support the **Priaultx Premature Baby Foundation**, providing care for families facing difficult starts to life.



## *Pastoral Care*

As we celebrate the Christmas season, a time of joy, reflection, and hope, we understand it can also be a challenging time for some. If you are in need of pastoral care, please reach out to either Carolyn or Justin. We want to ensure that you feel His love and the support of your church family. Whether you need a listening ear, prayers, or someone to walk with you through a difficult time, we are here for you. You are not alone, and this season of light and love is a reminder of the hope we share together.

## *Fundraising For The Church's Disability Access*

Our church is on a mission to ensure that everyone in our community feels truly welcome and included, and a big part of that involves updating our church building to make it more accessible and disability-friendly. We believe our church should be a space where everyone, regardless of their abilities, can gather, worship, and feel at home. Beyond serving as a place of worship, we hope these improvements will open the doors wider for the community to use and enjoy the building for various events, groups, and activities.

This is an ambitious project, and we need to raise £80,000 to make it a reality. Thanks to your incredible generosity, we've already raised over £10,000—a wonderful start! However, we still have a long way to go and ask for your continued support to help us meet our goal. If you are able to contribute, please let us know when you are donating specifically to this fund, so we can ensure your gift is directed to this important cause. Every contribution, no matter the size, makes a significant difference.

## *Singing in the Community*

After the wonderful success of last year's late-night shopping choir in the town square, we're excited to bring the Christmas cheer back again this year! To make it even bigger and better, we're looking for more voices to join our Christmas choir. No experience is necessary—just a love of the season and a willingness to join in the fun. And don't worry if you think your singing might scare the reindeer; enthusiasm is far more important than hitting every note perfectly!

This year, we have two festive opportunities to spread joy through song. On the 12th of December, from 17:00 to 18:00, we'll be leading the congregation singing in the market square—a perfect chance to share the spirit of Christmas with the whole community. Then, on the 21st of December at 11:00, we'll bring the carols to St. John's Residential Home, sharing the warmth of the season with residents. We'd love to have you join us for one or both events and help make this Christmas extra special. Come along and be part of the festive fun!

